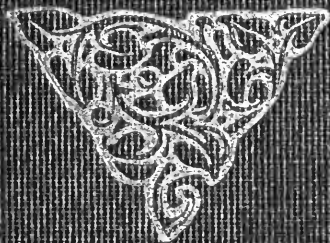


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In the College Days
A Group of Monologues
by Lindsey Barbee





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**IN THE
COLLEGE DAYS**

To My Mother

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

A GROUP OF MONOLOGUES

By LINDSEY BARBEE

AUTHOR OF

"AFTER THE GAME,"
"AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW,"
"THE DREAM THAT CAME TRUE,"
"THE FIFTEENTH OF JANUARY,"
"THE KINGDOM OF HEARTS; CONTENT,"
"THE THREAD OF DESTINY,"
AND
"A TRIAL OF HEARTS."



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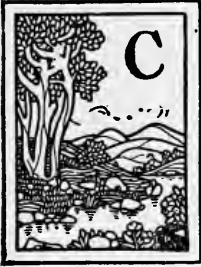
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PREFACE



COLLEGE is a little world within itself—it has its own traditions, institutions and types, each of which is dear to the one who has roamed the campus. College spirit never dies; years may come and go but the glamour of those happy days never leaves the one who has lingered in the enchanted land and like Aeneas of old, the college man together with the college woman is proud to say "I was a part of it all."

These monologues attempt to portray the different phases of the campus life; to depict the different individuals that compose the campus citizenship; to give to the uninitiated a glimpse of the glad, free life within the college walls. With a few exceptions, the speeches are those of college girls; but these exceptions, while illustrating types of college men, are written in such a way that they may be satisfactorily and perfectly rendered by women.

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BEFORE THE CURTAIN GOES UP

CHARACTERS:

THE PROMPTER.

THE CAST.

SCENE: *Behind the Curtain.*

PROMPTER: *Speaks.*

If I'm to hold the lines, *where* am I to sit? Over *there*? I can't see a thing. (*Turns.*) *Here*? Well, you people will never be able to hear me and you know you needed lots of prompting last night. Who made you up, Marie? I must say you look more like a soubrette than an elderly person and—(*Turns.*) Good gracious, Kathryn, a red, red rose isn't in it by the side of you! Of course one *does* appear pale in the glare of the footlights but there's a limit to profusion of color. (*Rubs Kathryn's cheek.*) Ugh! It comes off, too; now what do you suppose would happen to your countenance if the leading man should kiss you? I wish you had allowed *me* to do that job—I can put on make-up so that it

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

stays for days. Lucia, do get away from that hole in the curtain; you people have poked at it until it's noticeable from the audience, and you can't imagine how weird it is to see a spectral eye glaring from the opening. Stuart, either you or I must get out of the way—that dangling sword of yours has tripped me twice, and if it gets tangled up with you while you're making that high-flown speech, I see *your* finish. (*Turns.*) Mildred, your hair is out of curl and your petticoat shows. Come here and I'll pin it up. (*Bends over.*) Joe, couldn't you find a looser uniform? You give the impression of being so well-fed that you've outgrown your clothes—and I don't believe the Civil War furnished any such husky specimens. (*Turns.*) Elizabeth, don't look so fussed when Arch puts his arm around you—he doesn't mean anything by it, even in real life. And Arch—for goodness' sake—remember to take off your hat in that second act when you come in, wounded. Southern men always take off their hats in the presence of ladies—yes they do, too, even when

BEFORE THE CURTAIN

threatened by battle, murder or sudden death. (*She motions.*) Frances, in that last act when you're feeding custard to your man, for pity's sake don't drop the stuff on his uniform. We don't care to be charged extra for spots. Jerry, Confederate soldiers may have worn patent leather pumps with worn-out uniforms, but I doubt it. Bob and Madelyn, don't you forget for a moment that you're niggers; and Colonel, do your best to make that farewell scene pathetic. Your dying ought to make an awful hit. (*She motions wildly.*) Stand away from that overhanging beam, Muriel. If it should hit you in the head, I don't know what would become of that third act. It might kill you, too—stop to think about it!

The audience is getting very impatient. Why can't we ever begin on time? *What?* Everybody's been ready for five minutes? Well, why on earth didn't you say so! (*Excitedly.*) Scoot, all of you! Talk loud, wait for your laughs, make your points and above all—*don't* forget. (*Turns.*) Yes—the curtain! We're ready!

THE MAIDS OF YESTERDAY

CHARACTERS:

AN ALUMNA.

HER MAID.

AN ALUMNA: *Speaks, seated.*

There is nothing more to serve, Marie; when I have finished, I shall ring; and—one more word before you go. I thank you for your patience with the whims of a restless woman, for it has doubtless seemed very strange to you, this dinner with the five empty places. You are too young to realize the pathos of utter loneliness and yet even for you, Marie, there will come the time when the past is more vivid than the present; when the memory of old days, old friends will hold the very sweetness of life to you. Twenty-five years ago tonight, in the dismantled room of a dormitory, six of us held our last supper together. Six of us, who had gone through four long years side by side; who had shared the little joys and sorrows; who had worn the

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

badge of the self-same secret order. Stronger ties than the usual college friendship held us together; perfect understanding and sympathy made our comradeship a very precious thing. That was twenty-five years ago. The years have brought their changes and their separation; but the spirit of loyalty remains, and that is why I chose to be with them, tonight, in spirit. While you were thinking me the sole, silent, abstracted partaker of the feast, I was living again those days of carefree happiness; where you saw empty chairs I beheld the personalities of those whose friendship has meant so much to me; while you marveled at the quiet, at the gloom of it all, I was listening to girlish chatter and gay laughter—I was hearing once more the voices of the past. I shall not detain you longer, and as I said before, I thank you.

And so, dear girls of long ago, I summon you from a shadowy past. I declare that there are no such barriers as time, as space, as change; for now I see you as you were on that night so long ago, and I toast you from my

MAIDS OF YESTERDAY

heart of hearts! It is the cry of a lonely woman for the companionship of her youth, a woman for whom ambitions have been gratified, to whom the world has given much of that which is counted worth while; and yet a woman whose life is incomplete, whose spirit longs for the *something*, the unattainable, the indescribable that will bring her happiness.

(*She rises.*) To you, first, dear Ruth, I raise the cup of memory; you of the sunny hair, the tender eyes and the winsome smile. You, alone from our midst, have gone into the Great Unknown; you, alone, have solved the mystery of mysteries; and yet you have not left us, for in the wreath of our love and friendship you have twined the forget-me-nots of your sweetness, your unselfishness and your purity.

(*She raises her glass.*) And to you, Gertrude, I drink deeply of the wine of success. You have held in your hand the keys to the kingdoms of science, of literature and of art; you have claimed their treasures for your own. You are leader and educator by the gift of your

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

own talent and culture; Doctor of Philosophy by the favor of a great university; true woman and loyal friend by the grace of God!

(*She raises her glass.*) I should drink your toast to the sound of music, Elizabeth, the music that has always been so vital a part of you. Even in the old days, the magic of your fingers cast a spell over us, and now, sometimes, when I listen to you, I close my eyes and interpret the golden melody as it pleases my fancy; and ever and anon, I hear the rapturous trill of the freshman, the arrogant staccatos of the sophomore, the strong, steady chords of the junior, and the plaintive minor strain that marks the tender farewell of the senior.

(*She raises her glass.*) Only bright and sparkling wine, dear Anne, for you, with many an iridescent bubble of reputation. "All the world's a stage," you proclaimed in our college days; now, for you, all the stage is a world which is peopled by the creations of your genius; a stage whereon the elusive winsomeness of the maid has

MAIDS OF YESTERDAY

developed into the fascination and the wonderful personality of the woman. The plaudits of thousands have rung in your ears; the adoration of a multitude has been yours to command; and yet, I have ever with me the vision of the transcendently happy girl as she answered her first curtain call in the little college drama so long ago.

(*She raises her glass.*) Yet once again I raise my glass, and this time to you, Marian. Your quiet smile and tender handclasp have meant much to those of us who have struggled toward achievement; your word of encouragement, your gentle sympathy, have helped us along the rugged road to fame. And yet you asked for yourself no wider sphere than that of a happy home; you craved no greater reward than the labor, the unselfishness and the influence of a beloved mother. And which one of us will deny that you have chosen the better part.

In the words of your profession, Anne, "the lights are out and the curtain is rung down". The audience is gone, the flowers have faded and the

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

music dies away. Tonight is but a memory of the days that have been—that can never be again!

AFTER THE WEDDING

CHARACTERS:

ONE OF THE BRIDESMAIDS.

HER ESCORT.

SCENE: *A secluded corner.*

SHE: *Speaks*

Am I tired? Well—yes! Do I show
it?

Now don't dare to say that I do.
Will I rest? I will, and you know it.

I'm weary of dancing. Aren't you?
There's a palm-sheltered corner out
yonder—

Here—carry my bridesmaid bouquet
—(*Hands bouquet.*)

To this haven of peace let us wander
And rest 'long the strenuous way!

Yes—*strenuous*—for I'm confessing
I'm glad that the wedding is o'er;

I'm weary of dancing and dressing
And pre-nuptial parties galore.
There've been dinners and luncheons
and showers

And plenty of gay matinees;

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

We've reveled in hearts and in flowers
And arrows and cupids for days.
That's all very well for the maiden
Who can sleep all the following
morn;

But I—with my soph'more cares laden—

Oh truly, I'm wretched and worn.
For I've bluffed till I'm pos'tively
shameless;

I've cut till my pride is no more;
I've flunked with methodical sameness;
My failures will number a score.

But it's back to the text books to-morrow;

It's back to the ranks of the Sophs;
It's back to the class-rooms of sorrow;
It's back to beguiling the profs.

Oh, here is the corner we're seeking;

I like to be screened in from view;

It's always such fun to be peeking

At those who can never see you!

(Seats herself.)

Now what shall we talk of? The wedding?

The presents? The bridesmaids? The rice?

AFTER THE WEDDING

It sounds like a newspaper heading—
The *refreshments*, you say? That's
not nice.

Talk of *me*, then? There's nothing
worth saying;

I'm merely a soph'more, that's all.
But a student has no time for playing,
She must listen to Learning's stern
call.

Henceforth, I shall seek after knowl-
edge;

In the paths of reform I'll advance;
I'll be true to the precepts of college;

I'll—(*Quickly.*) What did you say
'bout a dance?

Next Friday? The Club? Oh, how
charming—

Will I go? What a question to ask!
I accept with a fervor alarming,
And find it no difficult task.

Let me see—Of what was I speaking?
My life-work? Oh yes. (*With dig-
nity.*) Without doubt,

A fuller experience I'm seeking;
I'm determined to reason it out.

Life's too short to frivol and fritter—
(*Suddenly.*) What a gorgeous fra-
ternity pin! (*Takes it.*)

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

All emeralds and diamonds a-glitter,
With date and initials within!
For the girl you're engaged to? How
thrilling!

How soon will you give it away?
Oh, not till you know she is willing?
Hurry up and find out what she'll
say!

(*Returns pin.*) Wait, *I'll* help you
discover her feelings;
I've thought of the wonderful-est
plan;

Quite like to Dan Cupid's own deal-
ings,
First aid to a love sick young man!
Have you paper? Yes? Then, will
you share it?

(*Takes it.*) (I'm assisting Fate—
don't be afraid!)

Into seven small strips I shall tear it;
(*Tears paper.*)

Write on each one the name of some
maid. (*Writes.*)

Have you wedding cake handy? You'll
need it—

(*Takes it.*) We'll tie all together—
just so—(*Ties.*)

AFTER THE WEDDING

Take a word of advice and then heed it,
If the name of your fate you would
know.

For a week dream upon it, each morn-
ing

Draw a slip—tear it up, right away.
Look not at the name—heed my warn-
ing—

And then on the dread seventh day,
Take out the last paper, unfold it,
Read the name of the maiden within;
The one whom fate chooses; behold
it—

And straightway take leave of that
pin!

(*Rising.*) Dear me! There is auntie
out yonder;

She thinks I have vanished from
sight.

I'll leave you to muse and to ponder
Those things which I've told you.
Good night.

(*A week later.*)

You just couldn't wait? How exciting!

What's happened to hurry you so?

You couldn't entrust it to writing?

Come tell me. I'm dying to know.

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

You drew the last paper, you're saying?

Oh I can't, I don't *want* to guess!

A trust I've been basely betraying;

I've something, right now to confess.

My name on the paper? I know it.

I'm pos'tively dying with shame.

What's more, I don't care if I show it,

For I wrote on each slip my own
name.

You *mean* it? After all I've confided?

You really had chosen me, dear?

Without help of the slips you decided?

Your pin? You may put it right
here!

AT THE GAME

CHARACTERS:

A FOOTBALL ENTHUSIAST.

HER ESCORT.

SCENE: *The grand-stand.*

SHE: *Speaks, seating herself.*

Dear me, Mr. Weston, give me time to think. I'm fairly gasping with knowledge, now that you have so fully explained football to me—in words of one syllable for young listeners. Why, you haven't left even a detail to the imagination. (*Turns.*) What's *that*? You believe that no girl is capable of thoroughly understanding the simplest phase of the game? That isn't nice of you, for in these progressive days, no one dares to slam the feminine intelligence; it's like dancing on the edge of a volcano. (*Pause.*) You didn't mean it that way? Oh-I-see! The same principle I presume that causes *us* to doubt the masculine comprehension of—oh, so many things—the eter-

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

nal feminine, for example. But I'm wandering from the subject, and I can tell from your expression that above all else, you desire me to pay strict attention to the game, and to refrain from asking ridiculous questions. (*Thoughtfully.*) Now, let me see. Those funny turning poles at each end of the field are the touchdowns, and the object of the game is to get the goal over them. (*Turns and holds up hand.*) Now, *don't* prompt me, for it's so much better to reason it out for myself! (*Points.*) Those white lines are used in keeping score, aren't they? Five points each time they push each other over! It reminds me of that funny old game of hop-scotch I used to play when a youngster. Oh-h-h! *Why* is everybody yelling so? (*Rises.*) The team? Poor things, just like lambs going to the slaughter. (*Seats herself and peers anxiously.*) What a beautiful kick—how much does it count? Suppose the ball hits somebody! (*Nudges her neighbor.*) See him run—oh, look, look—why he's gone ever so far; he's still going, and—Oh, I never saw any-

AT THE GAME

thing so disgusting; that big fellow grabbed him by the leg and pulled him down! (*Leans forward.*) Just watch them! fix their collective eye upon the ball—for all the world like rushing season, with the helpless freshman as the victim. (*Excitedly.*) My! See him dodge—and knock—and hammer! They've got him—no, they haven't—he's off again, and he's passed one, two, three of those white lines. Oh, how splendid! (*Turns to her companion.*) Why don't you yell? What's that? He happens to be on the other team? I suppose that *does* make a difference! (*Pause.*) What a silence! Why you can fairly hear it, and—watch that *kick*—'way over the turning pole! (*Looks anxiously around.*) What's the matter with the team? Don't they see that the ball is in full sight of everybody? And not a single man makes a move toward it! For sheer stupidity I've never seen the like—or is each too modest to brave the public eye? (*Turns.*) I don't blame you for being enthusiastic over the game; I'm getting all worked up myself. (*Leans forward.*) Why are they all scat-

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

tered out that way—or is the quarter over? How many quarters are there, anyway? Ah, now they're all huddling up again—it makes a queer, wiggly feeling go up and down my spine. (*Rises quickly.*) Look there, Mr. Weston, can't you see what they're doing? It's the same play that Billy Barton made in the game with Harvard—don't you remember? It saved the day, and—(*catches hold of his arm.*) Watch that quarter-back! He has the ball from center and has dropped upon the ground. The back field will hit the center like a center buck and—(*excitedly.*) What did I tell you? They're delaying a little. That's till the end comes round to make interference. There, *there!* See the quarter-back bob up with a clear field. Hooray-ray-ray! (*Turns.*) Don't look at me that way, Mr. Weston, because I'm apologizing just as fast as I can for deceiving you. I *do* know a great deal about football; I can't help it for my father was captain in his day, my brother is half back on the Yale team and when other girls were perusing Mother Goose, I

AT THE GAME

was learning the difference between flying wedges and drop kicks. Forget the inane remarks I've been guilty of, and let's settle down to enjoy the game. But first, just one word more—when you invite a visiting girl to a football game, Mr. Weston, be pretty sure of her pedigree in that line, and don't tell her that she can't understand the technicalities. (*Suddenly.*) Who has the ball now? *Our* men? Pretty work!

MOLLY RECEIVES

CHARACTERS:

MOLLY MEREDITH, *a typical college girl.*

BESS, *who stands next in line.*

SCENE: *One corner in the college gymnasium at the opening reception of the college year.*

MOLLY MEREDITH: *Speaks.*

(Struggling with refractory glove.) Here I am, Bess, on time for once in my life. It took the united efforts of the family to get me off, but—*(holding out arm.)* Would you mind fastening this left glove? It's just about killing me, and—*(looking more closely at her arm.)* Well, no wonder! It's Kate's, and, incidentally, two sizes smaller than mine. How stupid of me to get them mixed. Oh well *(placing hand stiffly at side)*, I'll hide my sufferings under a smiling countenance, and the fact that my right hand appears larger than the left will perhaps be ascribed to its being

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

violently shaken by the incoming student body at the opening reception of the college year. Think of my being chosen to appear in the receiving line, where heretofore have been found only those who bask in the light of faculty approbation, and who are chosen as models for the imitative and imaginative freshmen. It's the first time in my checkered career that I've been lifted to the pedestal of a public example and I'm a bit dizzy and demoralized by the sudden prominence. (*Looks around.*) Where am I to stand? Oh, by you? How perfectly fine! And at the very end of the line? (*Moves down a few steps.*) What an opportunity for self-effacement! For the victim will be so physically incapacitated and so mentally deficient by the time he reaches me that it will only be necessary to flash a dazzling smile upon him and to thrust him into the dissipation of the social whirl awaiting him. Dissipation! When the biggest thrill of the evening is the discussion of one's course of study! Dissipation! At an opening reception—think of it Bess; one might

MOLLY RECEIVES

sooner imagine Socrates learning to rag!
(*Bending and looking down line.*) “By the pricking of my thumbs—A good full-back this way comes.” Look, Bess, isn’t he some weight? And the very first one to arrive on the scene of action; green, gullible and ready for the grid-iron, I’d call him. (*Nudging Bess.*) Look at him shake Mrs. Prexy’s hand—for all the world like a pump-handle—and behold his agitation as his gaze falls upon us. I’ll make him feel at home. Oh, Mr. Phillips? (*Shaking hands.*) I’m so glad to meet you, and in imagination I’m already counting the victims that will fall under your perfectly good avoirdupois. (*Shaking a finger at him.*) Now don’t say a word, for we co-eds simply adore football men and you’ll soon become accustomed to excessive adoration. How many are out for practice? And what chance for a winning team have we? (*Pause*) Oh—oh! You’re studying theology? How terrible—two hundred pounds gone wrong! Oh, I beg your pardon. I didn’t mean that, and I suppose you really *do* need muscle to fight the devil. If—(*turn-*

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

ing.) Mercy, Bess, see him run. I believe he thinks I'm allied with His Satanic Majesty, and here I thought he was a football possibility. Blow number one; but Molly, crushed to earth, shall rise again! Bess, the prospects of my becoming an easy and tactful welcomer of guests are a wee bit gloomy. (*Catches Bess by the arm.*) For pity's sake, behold Miss Simpkins! They do say that she has attended these festive occasions for twenty-five years. (*Shaking her head.*) No, Bess, I'm *not* mistaken. Dad took her to a church social when he was a freshman. She was man-hunting then— isn't it pathetic?—and is still pursuing her prey. How she acquired that fraternity pin is the one problem that the college world has never been able to solve. (*Smilingly.*) Well, look who's here! (*Shakes hands.*) Miss Simpkins in the duckiest kind of a new gown! Do you suppose it would be terribly out of place for you to revolve and give me the general effect? (*Looks critically.*) Thanks, and I'm going to copy it if you don't mind. If I were not the most

MOLLY RECEIVES

amiable creature in the world, Miss Simpkins, I'd be downright provoked with you for coming tonight. *Why?* Because every single college man will be dancing attendance upon you. Now, just take my advice and—*what's that?* You won't take advice from someone you knew in kindergarten? Miss Simpkins, that makes me feel positively hilarious, for if anybody as young as *you* remembers me in kindergarten, I can't be so Methuselah-like as I feel! For I discovered my first gray hair today and I held a little memorial all by myself—offered it up on the altar of my vanished youth you know, and all that sort of thing. Now, what's your hurry? (*Knowingly.*) Oh, *I* see—that good-looking man over there! Well, I can't offer any attraction so great as that, so I'll see you later. (*Waves hand and turns to Bess.*) Now, Bess, I know you think I'm a sinner for saying all those flattering things, but I intend to disagree with you for once in my life. For I've come to the conclusion that if you can make people feel a wee bit better, at the expense of

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

conscience and even truth, *do it!* Sounds heretical doesn't it? But as to conscience, there are times when it's wise to do it up in forgetfulness like a nice little pearl all swathed in cotton.

(*Tragically.*) Mercy on us! What dream of prehistoric ages approaches? Give me a tip, Bess, quick—(*leans to listen.*) Oh, the noted lecturer—of—what? Rom—Rom—oh yes, I have it—(*with relieved expression.*) Romance Languages. (*To herself.*) It will certainly be a good stunt to open fire with some French. (*Shaking hands and smiling archly.*) Le nouveau lecteur? Bon soir, j'ai beaucoup de plaisir de vous rencontrer et je serai une interessee auditeur a—(*turning suddenly.*) What is the matter with him, Bess? His speed resembles that of a sky rocket. Is my French as bad as all that, and—(*puzzled and then horrified look comes on her face.*) What? Roman Antiquities instead of Romance Languages? I caught just the first syllable and my vivid imagination did the rest. No wonder he glared at my frivolous self! (*Fanning herself.*) Fan me with one of

MOLLY RECEIVES

the bricks he's so fond of deciphering! (*Glances down line.*) Life brightens, interest revives, for look coming down the line—that adorable freshman! Have we all our dates with her? (*Graciously extends both hands.*) Miss Vernon, I'm certainly glad to see you. (*Nods to escort.*) And Mr. Haven, too. Such a will-o'-the-wisp maiden as you are; we can't even put our collective finger upon you. Now remember you have lunch dates with us for Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and chapel dates for Monday and Wednesday. And will you save the afternoons of the ninth, eighteenth and twenty-fifth for us, and the evenings of the thirteenth and twentieth? That's good of you and (*confidentially*), you *do* like us a little bit, don't you? Someway I've an intuitive feeling that—stop nudging me Bess—I won't break Pan - Hellenic rules. (*Whispering.*) Will you let me talk to you later on? Thanks again. Come to see us at the sorority house, Mr. Haven. The latch-string is always on the outside, for *you*; and *do* bring Miss Vernon along with you.

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

(*To Bess.*) Being at the novissimum agmen as old Caesar used to say—is my Latin correct and proper, Bess?—isn't the snap I pictured it. The glad-hand and the smile-without-words stunt won't do; everybody expects a speech all to himself. (*Suddenly.*) Who's our good-looking friend? A freshman I'd say if it were not for that perfectly immaculate dress suit. New student, anyway, so I'll extend the right hand of fellowship and throw in a few helpful suggestions just for good measure. (*Brightly.*) Mr. Ellis? Charmed, I'm sure, and so glad to welcome you to the college life. Everything may seem new to you now, but you'll soon get accustomed to our wild and strange ways. Now don't worry a minute about your schedule. If it doesn't work at first, it's no sign that it *won't*. Don't make the mistake of staying out of college activities; it's so much better to be a part of it all; and above all, don't let the faculty frighten you. Now—let me see—I want to introduce you to someone really worth while, so that you'll feel at home. You've already met just

MOLLY RECEIVES

that person? Who is it, if I may ask. Oh, do you mean *me*? How perfectly dear of you to say so. It was prettily said for a freshman, and—*What?* (*Blankly.*) I—I—don't think I understand; I—You're one of the new professors? I beg your pardon for what I said—I do—I do. No, I don't either, for it's maddening and it's deceiving for you to look so young when you doubtless have the whole alphabet of degrees after your name. Don't you dare laugh at me, when I am fairly prostrated by my failure as a social entertainer. When will my bondage be over? Pretty soon, if measured by my success. Will I meet you afterwards? With the greatest pleasure. And where? Oh let's say by the punch bowl; that sounds convivial and companionable; and I shall be *that* anxious to drown my sorrow in the flowing cup! Till later, then!

(*To Bess, enthusiastically.*) Bess, is there such a thing as tactless idiocy? If so, I've got it. Think of calling that perfectly good Beta (yes he *is* a Beta for I saw his pin) a freshman. A

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

Beta and a professor to boot—woe is me! And yet, perchance it was my lucky move, for the man's not slow, verily *not*, and I see possibilities, Bess (*dreamily*), I see possibilities. Yes my dear, I'm perfectly aware that Mr. Horton, my erstwhile flame, is approaching and with him the combination of conceit and cockiness that thinks she's captured him. No, it isn't sour grapes, not a bit of it, for anybody who knows the A B C of retaining a man's devotion can hold Harry Horton. (*Disgustedly.*) And if she isn't wearing his frat pin! Straighten up, Molly, and play ball, even if you're forced to slug! (*Effusively.*) Why, Harry Horton, what fun to see you! It makes me think of the reception last year when I rolled up in a taxicab, carried an armful of American Beauties and thrilled over five pounds of candy on the way home—all due to you, too, you lavish creature. (*Reaching out her hand.*) Doesn't he know how to treat a girl, Miss Sargent? Oh-h-h! You're displaying a very familiar pin. Congratu-

MOLLY RECEIVES

lations and shake again. (*Extends hand again.*) I enjoyed wearing it so much last year, and I know just how proud you feel. Goodbye and so happy to have seen you.

(*Turning to Bess.*) Bess, stop looking at me in that reproachful way. I know it wasn't nice but it was—oh such a relief! Don't you know that the best woman in the world has a bit of cattiness about her? Well, I'm not the best woman, not by a long shot, and I won't mind it a bit if you stroke my fur and say "Pussy! Pussy!" (*Nervously.*) Do my eyes deceive me? Isn't that Fanny Fenton wearing a Beta Sig pledge pin, after telling us last spring when we bid her that she *couldn't* and *wouldn't* decide upon anything until Christmas! (*Scornfully.*) Christmas indeed, and this is September. No Bess, I won't be calm; my vial of wrath isn't quite empty. Oh, I won't tear off that cascade of puffs—I'm not so primitive as that; but I'll show her that—(*gayly.*) Oh Miss Fenton, Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas, I say, even if the calendar

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doesn't, and I don't believe you refer to your calendar very often. Now don't pretend you don't understand—it's such a mistake to underestimate one's intelligence—and if you think right hard I'm sure you'll realize the significance of my salutation. You know, Miss Fenton, that no geometrical problem is quite as it should be until Q. E. D. is written after it. Geometry is a prep study of course, but even in college we use those three letters after certain—transactions we'll say. Too bad you're not given the opportunity of writing it under your own particular problem but I suspect that the failure of your proposition is due to the fact that the base of your structure isn't *quite* straight. Merry Christmas again!

(*To Bess.*) Now Bess, what could be more artistic than that? My sweetest smile, my suavest manner and yet my most wholesome discipline. I never *did* want that girl anyway. Oh dear, my feet are just killing me! I didn't tell you at first but now I will. I couldn't find my own slippers and

MOLLY RECEIVES

borrowed Jane's, and—here comes my own particular man. I *never* was so glad to see anybody. (*Extending both hands.*) Jack, do you know what they call a reinforcement that arrives just when the besieged party is almost at the end of it's strength, has exhausted it's ammunition and is wholly overwhelmed by the attacks of the enemy? Well, no matter what the technical name may be, you're *it*! Come on! (*Limps off.*)

THE JOYS OF RUSHING

CHARACTERS:

CHAIRMAN OF THE RUSHING COMMITTEE.

THE SORORITY GIRLS.

SCENE: *The Sorority House.*

THE CHAIRMAN: *Speaks.*

(*Sinking into a chair.*) Will somebody get me a glass of water and a fan? (*Reaches out her hand.*) Thanks. I've been with that Mary Gibson all afternoon and it's like conversing with the Sphinx. If she likes us, she wouldn't show it for the world; if she doesn't like us, she won't tell us until the bids are out. The time I've devoted to her has cost me about ten dollars in cold, hard cash, a week's flunking and an unlimited amount of strength and energy.

(*Turns.*) Where are you going, Belle? To play tennis? Not much. I've asked Miss Gibson to drop in for afternoon tea and she's due shortly. (*Emphatically.*) Now you needn't say a word.

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The Delta Chi's have her tonight and we simply cannot waste a bit of time. *Engagement?* Well you shouldn't make an engagement during rushing season unless it's with a freshman. Anyway, one's sorority interests should come first. Yes, I know you're sick of looking at her; who isn't? But it's up to us to play the game to the end. Now be reasonable, for you need prepare nothing but tea, sandwiches and cakes. (*Turns.*) No cakes? Then hustle right off to the store, Lucia. Go up a side street—for you're pretty apt to meet her on the avenue and I wouldn't for the world have her think that we don't run things according to schedule. (*Shakes her head.*) No, nothing else; *run*. Now Jean, move the rug over that dusty place—we haven't time to clean—and whatever happens, don't let her sit on that wobbly sofa. It's liable to break any minute, and I've heard of girls going the other way on account of just such accidents. What's that, Beth? Mayonnaise for five sandwiches only? Well make those five and finish out with cheese. No cheese either? Well,

THE JOYS OF RUSHING

use library paste on the others and be sure to give them to our girls; you'd better put them underneath so she won't be likely to take one. Frances, set some flowers under that picture of the founders; it makes a hit and we're strong for hits. Well, *hunt* some flowers. Here take the daisies off my hat. At a distance, she'll never know they are artificial. Good gracious, here she comes. Watch out for Lucia some of you and head her toward the kitchen with those cakes. (*Advances.*) Oh, Miss Gibson, so glad to see you—so very glad —(*extends both hands*), and you don't know how much we appreciate your dropping in informally. No, not the sofa my dear, this big chair we keep for honored guests, and you surely head *that* list. There, and just as soon as you're rested, we'll give you some tea. We always prepare for afternoon tea; such a cozy sort of custom, don't you think? and it's become a habit with us to keep cakes and sandwiches for these daily functions. (*Hands her the tea.*) Here's your tea, and I don't believe you need

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any sugar—you're sweet enough. Indeed, I *do* mean it, too, for it isn't often that I take such a fancy to a freshman as I have to you. (*Hands sandwiches.*) Sandwiches? (*Hastily.*) Oh don't take that one down there—*don't*. How perfectly silly of me, but you see I made this mayonnaise and I'm so anxious to have your opinion that I'm correspondingly vehement. (*Turns.*) There's Lucia, straight from the kitchen with a plate of cakes that have been waiting all day just for you to sample. Oh, the flowers? We put them under the picture of our founders each day, as an offering, don't you know, to these grand women who made our sorority possible for us. Oh must you go—really? Why you haven't been here ten minutes and we did want you to hear our songs. *What's that?* Oh-h with Theta Sigma at five? Well you've just about time to make it, you popular thing! Shall we see you again? Please do, for you can't come too often as far as we are concerned. If we had *our* way we wouldn't let you go at all. Goodbye, and remember,

THE JOYS OF RUSHING

you're to go to chapel with me tomorrow! (*Turns*) Look here girls—we've slipped a cog. I someway feel that she drew a paste sandwich—and as to those cakes—they were made for Washington's inauguration! Oh well—it's all in a life time! Depart to your tennis, Belle; and go on any place, all the rest of you! If you can get any pleasure out of life, hang on to it like grim death! As for me I'm going to bed, and to sleep, even if I dream of Mary Gibson!

CONCERNING EXAMS

CHARACTERS:

AN UPPER CLASSMAN.

THREE STUDIOUS FRESHMEN.

SCENE: *A room in the dormitory.*

UPPERCLASSMAN: *Speaks, knocking at door.*

Hi, you freshmen! Do you mind if I come in? (*Opens door and enters.*) Studying, aren't you? Just as I suspected, and fairly paralyzed over the prospect of these midyear exams! I feel it my duty to cheer you up and to show you the futility of cramming at the eleventh hour. (*Seats herself.*) What's that, Lucy? Oh, an algebra. Dear child you might as well put it away right now, for if you could say each theorem backward and knew how to work every problem in the book, it wouldn't help you a bit. For everybody knows that the class is too large for the professor to examine *all* the papers. Why he merely glances at

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one example on each page; if it's right, you pass; if it's wrong, you flunk. So you see, any amount of studying doesn't help; it's just luck. Not fair? Maybe not, but it would never do to mention it; the faculty is so set in it's way!

Latin, Marie? And you're foolish enough to review all that Livy? You'd better be practicing on dactylic hexameter. Why? Because his favorite stunt is to pick out a certain chapter (usually one that you've read at sight) and ask you to translate it in the form of dactylic hexameter. Livy is a bit prosaic at best, and it certainly does take ingenuity to twist it into poetry. Still, there's no use worrying about it.

What have you been doing in English, Ruth? Oh, the American authors. That's not so bad, if she doesn't request you to quote an entire essay from memory. That's something that you really can't make up on the spur of the moment and I've known half of the freshman class to flunk just on account of that very question.

What's that, Lucy? You think you

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are sure of getting through in Bible? Well, of course, *you* may think it is easy to trace the genealogy and to give the age of all the patriarchs, but I *don't*. Not a practical question? Of course it isn't. Who, but an unsophisticated freshman would expect a practical question in examinations!

What's that? Nine o'clock? (*Rises*) I must be moving on! Is that a psychology, Marie? Of course I don't *know*, but I hardly think you'll be given a single question from the text book. The "psych" professor fairly dotes on what he calls abstract interrogations—and sometimes it's so confusing that you really forget the particular subject upon which you're being examined. Are you good at mind-reading? Well, I don't want to discourage you but he's very apt to ask you to write his own inner thoughts. If you happen to strike it right, he won't like it; if you don't tell the truth, of course he flunks you. So what *is* one to do?

I shouldn't have interrupted you I suppose, but I knew you would be worrying about exams and I felt that

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I *ought* to cheer you up a bit. If I were you, I'd put away all these books and have a fudge party; for one thing is certain, some of you are *obliged* to get through for it's up to the college to produce a sophomore class. Good-night!

THE FRESHMAN SPEAKS EXTEMPORANEOUSLY

CHARACTERS:

TWO FRESHMEN.

SCENE: *A room in the college building.*

ONE FRESHMAN: *Speaks, seated.*

Laura, I'm paralyzed with fright; my teeth are chattering like castanets and my knees are shaking until I know I can never stand upon them. Don't be silly, you know perfectly well what I mean. What's the *matter?* Why, Katherine has been called away and has made me take her place in the debate. She didn't tell me till just now, and I don't know what to say. (*Pause.*) Why, I couldn't help myself; as a pledge to Kappa Psi I've *got* to do what the upperclassmen tell me, and Katherine says I *must* learn to speak extemporaneously. (*Miserably.*) Oh, I wish I were dead, I do, I do! I'm afraid to leave, I've done my best to faint and—(*starting.*) Are they calling

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my name? Pray for me, Laura. (*She rises, advances and clears her throat.*) Madam President, ladies and gentlemen—oh I beg your pardon, there aren't any gentlemen present. (*Giggles nervously.*) It is with great pleasure that I rise to speak upon one of the most stupendous questions of the day: Is the intellect of woman superior to that of man? How can we hesitate in the consideration of such a problem? Is not it's solution easily obtained? (*Oratorically.*) On one hand we have man—weak, puerile man. What has man done to claim our slightest appreciation and gratitude? On the other hand—*woman*; woman who has climbed from the lowest social position to the highest pinnacle of—(*hesitates*)—well, to the highest pinnacle. Compared with such prowess, we can but see that man is—(*gropes for words*)—is—(*desperately*)—not in it! Oh my friends, can we stand idly by when the burning issue of such a question is at stake? No; I beg of you, rouse yourselves! March side by side to—to—(*hesitates*)—well, march side by side.

THE FRESHMAN SPEAKS

(*Impressively.*) Is the intellect of woman superior to that of man? No, I say, no! A thousand times, *no!* (*Perceiving her mistake.*) Oh, I mean yes—yes—a thousand times, *yes!*

FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE BELL

CHARACTERS:

A NERVE-RACKED STUDENT.

THE CLASS.

SCENE: *The class-room.*

A NERVE-RACKED STUDENT: *Speaks, seated.*

S-st! Nell! Let me see your watch. (*Peers anxiously.*) Five minutes more! Heavens! I don't see how I'll have the nerve to live through it! For thirty-five minutes I've sat here, a quaking mass of humanity, momentarily expecting him to hurl some question at me. My constitution is shattered; I know I shall never be myself again, and to think that my physical prostration should be due to an overwhelming ignorance of this indigestible pedagogical stuff. Don't look at me in that tone of voice, Nell; from a moral standpoint, I should have

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studied, I admit it, but what sane person would hesitate between a forty page discussion upon The Transition Stage of Moral Development, and a dance at the Country Club! Not I! (*Pauses, assumes an interested expression, and nods her head decidedly.*) Didst note my rapt expression, the glance of keen intelligence, the attitude of thorough understanding? I scintillate in this fashion only when my sixth sense tells me that a question of which I haven't the slightest knowledge is about to be propounded. You heard our beloved instructor ask for illustrations of the instinctive basis of various emotions, didn't you? He had his eagle eye upon me and it behooved me to play my trump card. I allowed my being to o'erflow with the deluge of inner comprehension; I beamed illustrations; they oozed from my very finger-tips; in the presence of such enlightenment, why should *he* question *me* who *knew*? Were it not better to draw out the thoughts of one not so enwrapped in the illumination of revelation? Accordingly, he passed

FIVE MINUTES BEFORE

me by; which goes to prove my favorite theory that, given the ability to grasp the psychological moment, a woman may so sway the indecision of man that he is as clay in the hands of the potter!

What time, is it, Nell? (*Looks at watch.*) Three more minutes? (*Yawns.*) My, but I'm sleepy! (*Looks around.*) Oh, Nell, quick, behold the theological specimen on the back seat. My modest yawn has inspired him to perpetrate one of mammoth proportions. Goodness! I can see way down his esophagus and can even detect parts of his alimentary canal. Physiology made easy, we might call the exhibition. Same principle you know as German thoroughly mastered in ten lessons. (*Nudges her neighbor.*) Listen, Nell, to that wonder of the century over there. Did you hear her apologize for outlining only four volumes of reference? Four volumes of reference, and for unhappy me, the mere text book is an undiscovered land. Well, I never aspired to the Columbus stunt anyway, so it is a tribute to my sweet and unassuming manner that I am content

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

with the crumbs of knowledge, while others gorge themselves upon the fulness of the feast. Isn't that last phrase charmingly alliterative?

Nell, let me see your watch again. (*Looks closely.*) Only a minute and a half and the gods are with us! Surely he won't call on me now. (*Sighs deeply.*) I may as well take a long breath and relax. I presume each one of us has her marvelous escapes to relate, but never before have I been so near the verge of flunking. This rescue today, miraculous as it seems, has—(*starts nervously.*) I beg your pardon, professor! Would you state the question again? (*Pauses, then repeats slowly.*) Has the search for scientific facts been carried on in order that they may be directly applied in practical life, or merely that the truth may be known? Dear me, what an inexhaustive subject. It admits of many arguments, doesn't it? (*Thoughtfully.*) Now let me see; in regard to the first part of the query, I would say that authors have differed in their views; and certainly the second part has aroused antagon-

FIVE MINUTES BEFORE

istic opinions. Why—there's the bell! I had no idea that the hour was so nearly over! May I finish this discussion tomorrow, professor? I've had no chance to give my own views. (*Rises.*) Oh thank you, so much!

(*Feebly.*) Nell, assist my trembling frame from the edge of the precipice. Never again will I go so near it! Henceforth, I bow to no shrine, save that of—study!

AFTER TEN YEARS

CHARACTERS:

TWO ALUMNI.

SCENE: *The college campus.*

ONE ALUMNUS: *Speaks.*

Come along, Bob, sneak away with me into the shadows of oblivion; calmly efface yourself and forget that ten years ago you were a mighty lord of this campus and a howling part of the greatness thereof! As an alumnus of this growing institution, you may think you are entitled to some recognition, but forget it! You are become but a part of the landscape and to the younger generation there is no choice 'twixt you and an Egyptian mummy, save that the mummy is more interesting. Your dancing is antiquated; your college vernacular is of an early vintage; your slang bears the earmarks of "used to was"; your campus antics are on the bum; why in another year you'll be sitting in the grand-

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

father corner, feebly swapping stories, weakly joking the verdant freshman, and prefacing all your remarks with "Now in my day—."

Here, give me a light, Bob. I'll smoke the pipe of peace and ruminate upon these new rushing rules. Haven't heard them? Man alive, then you steer clear of that frat house or you'll get so tangled up in your efforts to readjust the past to the present that rescue will be nigh on to impossible. Rushing is to be simplified I'm told; we may courteously greet the victim as he passes on the campus; we may tender him a pink tea, with representatives from all the other frats looking on so that no outrage can be perpetrated; we may have him once to dinner if we skilfully avoid any topic that savors of a Greek letter; and, after he's been duly swallowed and digested, we may present him a dignified written bid, served on a silver salver, tied with the chosen colors and stamped with the seal of faculty approbation. Bah, what a contrast to the good old days when we pounced upon the innocent

AFTER TEN YEARS

and unsuspecting freshman, locked him up, convinced him of the hopelessness of life should he cast his lot with the wrong bunch, and then pledged him! While we initiated him in a way that stamped the Spanish Inquisition as a far-off blessing! No molly coddle stunts for us; no probation stage of fishing in a pail of water before the chapel steps; nothing so easy as proposing publicly to a coed; no frivolous humiliation of appearing in one tan shoe and one black one! Nay, nay, nothing like that in our family! We skinned him and ate him alive, and if there happened to be enough of him left to appear in chapel next day, we regarded it as a chapter disgrace.

And they're regulating the college; did you know that? Regulating the college in a way that will make the cause of education a delusion and a snare. Anyone would think that people came to this place for the little bit of knowledge packed in between book covers! Regulating the college! Bob, do you realize that there hasn't been a single riot since the new rules went

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

in? That the college property has remained intact? That Prof. Russell's cow is dragging out a serene and eventless existence? That—oh hang it all! Are the times all wrong, or—I speak it softly—is civilization advancing? For—I confess it only to you, old sport—the pranks and diversions of ten years ago are viewed from another standpoint. At present, I'd think twice before attaching a beer sign to the theological school; I might even hesitate about removing the pews from the chapel; maybe I'd balk at setting fire to one of the buildings; who knows? Conscience doth make cowards of us all, and someday I may even repent the error of my ways. I preach, Bob; I moralize; it's the beginning of the end! I glide hopelessly into the realm of antiquity, where as an alumnus I serve only to point a moral or adorn a tale!

AT THE GLEE CLUB CONCERT

CHARACTERS:

A COLLEGE GIRL.

HER ESCORT.

SCENE: *A concert room.*

SHE: *Speaks.*

Oh, which are our seats? The end ones? Fine, and way down in front. (*Sits herself.*) Brother Dick says that at a Glee Club Concert he always seeks the back row, on the principle that distance lends enchantment, but not for me! I like to be near enough to see them work their mouths. Great advantage to be on the Glee Club, isn't it, and a great source of pleasure to those concerned. Oh—how's that? Yes, I suppose it *does* help to revel in the harmony of sweet sounds as you put it, but I wasn't thinking of that. What appeals to me is the festivity attendant upon the concert tour; the

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

dinners, the parties and the wholesale fun. (*Suddenly.*) Oh look, there's Kate Harvey and her fiance; what sort of a man is he? Square and upright you say? Oh I'm sure I wouldn't like him, he sounds too much like a piano. (*Lowering her voice.*) Did you ever see such a head as on that woman in the front row? "Sunning o'er with curls!" You put it rather poetically I think; "bubbling o'er with puffs," I'd say, and they're artificial ones at that! (*Leaning forward and bowing.*) Oh, good evening, Ruth; good evening Mr. Morehouse. (*Turning to her escort.*) Isn't it great to be right on the end where people are in hailing distance? Look at that dress of hers — solid Valenciennes they say. Oh-h! *Did* you see that awkward man put his foot right on the train? I *know* that it tore, and I would also wager my best hat that I could repeat what she's saying. Just *this*: "It doesn't make the least difference," and smiling sweetly all the time while inside of her there's a miniature Vesuvius of wrath at work. Truly convention doth make angels of

AT THE GLEE CLUB

us all! (*Opening her program.*) Well, suppose we look at the program—dear me, what's going to happen! "Rocked in the Cradle of the Deep" is not listed; it seems almost a sacrilege. This selection used always to open the entertainment but it proved such a soothing influence that the audience became sleepy and the management thought it best to shift it to the last as a sort of preparation for the nightly rest. What is the last number? Oh, "Speed Away." Well that's timely and appropriate too.

This third song is very plaintive, heart-rendering in fact. Once upon a time I heard the quartette give it and everybody was suffused with tears; you could scarcely hear the melody for the sniffing. Seeing other people weep always makes me go to pieces and I was just about to collapse when I spied Tom Perkins' vest fastened two buttons too high, and I became hysterical. A dear, old lady near by tried to soothe me but the more I gazed at Tom's tipsy vest alongside of Tom's exalted and beatific countenance the worse I grew! (*Sud-*

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

denly.) Oh, "The Stein Song!" I'm glad of that; the "good fellows get together" line always sends me into the seventh heaven. Nobody but a college man can sing that song and do perfect justice to it. Good gracious! Here's a selection in German, with Fred Hunter in the solo part; the fact that he flunked in German for two successive years makes his prominence suggestive and significant: and also shows how easy it is to circumvent the faculty. (*Enthusiastically.*) Oh *here* they come! Let's give them a good send-off. Why can't we yell, I wonder! If it were the foot ball team we'd never think of anything so tame as mere clapping of hands. But, I presume, in the regular scheme of things the tribute to muscle must necessarily differ from that to vocal chords. Don't they look nice—all of them! And aren't they a credit to the college! I always think of what old Prexy tells them: "Remember that you stand for all that is best in our University;" and I believe that they do!

ON THE SIDE LINES

CHARACTERS:

A QUARTERBACK.

HIS COMPANION.

SCENE: *Side lines at a football game.*

THE QUARTERBACK: *Speaks.*

Six minutes to play—a tie—and I'm out of the game! Heavens, man, do you realize what you've done; do you know that you've dragged me from that heaving, seething mass, just when they've needed me, *needed me?* Hurt? What if I am, do you think I haven't the nerve, the grit to play it out? Why it's my last game—my last game—can't you understand? Do you know what it is to hope, to dream, to work for a thing, and then to have it taken from you? In his last game a man doesn't stop to think of strained ligaments, or of broken bones. He's only a fierce, panting bit of his college—fighting for her glory—willing to lay down his very life if he brings the

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victory! (*Eagerly.*) Look, they're forming again. Somebody else is at quarter, giving my signals, *my* signals; and I'm out of it, powerless to raise a finger, with every muscle of me aching to be in the midst, to break through the line. Oh don't pity me—a football man who has been knocked out can stand anything but that. (*He pauses.*) They're too still—something's wrong—heavens can't they see, can't they know where we're weak! Don't tell me we've lost the ball! (*Hides face.*) I, someway, can't stand it, and I'm a bit unstrung, perhaps. (*Joyfully.*) We've got it again, you say? Then hold on like grim death you fellows! Steady now, steady! (*Counts.*) 8-3-16-11—oh if I were only there—if I could only be a part of it! Pretty work, Duke, pretty work. Good! (*Eagerly.*) Look at him, *look* at him—twenty yards! That's the stuff, old man! Watch out now for that tackle—too low—missed, didn't it? Ah-h-! He's over the line, he's over the—(*turning*). Yell man, *yell*—yell as you've never yelled before! (*Tensely.*) Ah, we've got to kick goal—

ON THE SIDE LINES

we've *got* to—(*looks away*). If we should miss—It's over, you say? Then—here, help me up, will you? I've got to have a hand in this; I've got to split my lungs with the rest of them! *Exert* myself? Gosh, man, don't you realize that it's my *college*, my *team*—and that we've won—we've *won*?

AT SUNSET

CHARACTERS:

TWO SENIORS.

SCENE: *On the campus.*

ONE SENIOR: *Speaks.*

Wait, Marge, just a moment, and watch the sunset with me for the last time. Tomorrow we'll be scattered to the four winds and only the memory—the memory—will be with us. Oh, I'm not trying to make the parting hard—I'm *not*—I only want to hold fast the few moments that are left us; I only want to drink in the beauty of it all ere it fades away and leaves in the paler tints but an afterglow of former splendor. For it's Commencement eve, and tomorrow we say goodbye. Four years have the two of us marched side by side, term in and term out, under the bonny banner of our college; together, we've shared the disappointments, the trials; together, we've been glad in the honors and the

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

joys that have come our way. And now—(*pointing*) oh see the old college as it stands revealed in that rosy glow, every corner, every angle clear against the brilliant background! How much it has meant to us; how much it has given us. Why, we've had only to stretch forth our hands to grasp all we could hold of its treasures. The wisdom of the ages, ours for the asking; the inspiration of life, if we would only receive! Many a lesson have we learned between the covers of our textbooks; many a harder problem awaits us in the larger school to which we're going; but the college spirit is with us, the college love that has mothered us for four happy years will arm us for the greater tests, will nerve us to our finest, truest efforts. It's hard to leave, and yet—why Marge, there's a queer little catch in my voice and a lump in my throat—and—

(*She points.*) Look at the sorority house. Has it ever seemed fairer, has it ever been dearer than in this last moment? Ah, Marge, even in this little college world—quiet, secluded,

AT SUNSET

restricted—we have known our disillusionments, we have felt the bitterness of disappointment, we have borne the sting of unjust criticism; yet the sorority life has helped us to rise above it all; has more than overbalanced all the sacrifice and grief that may have been ours; has been the sweetest, truest influence of our college life. Other girls will take our places in the class rooms; other girls will know the glad, carefree life of the campus; but in that little brown house over yonder, there will always be a welcome for us; in that ever widening circle about the hearth-fire, we shall always find the outstretched hand, the whispered word, the understanding heart.

The last sun of our college days has set; one by one the stars are shining above us. Shall we call one, *loyalty*, and another, *labor*, and still another, *love*? And see, above them all there rises the golden crescent of the moon! Our sorority symbol, Marge, a good omen; a talisman to carry into the great tomorrow! Serenely it beams

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upon us, and—I cannot see it—it's
outline is blurred—for—Come, Marge,
we'll go—together.

BETWEEN DANCES

CHARACTERS:

A COLLEGE YOUTH.

HIS PARTNER.

SCENE: *The stair-steps.*

HE: *Speaks, seated.*

So you don't believe in fraternities, Miss Brown! Good gracious! Now who would imagine that anyone so absolutely progressive and up to date as you could go over to the side of the moss-grown, back-a-century individuals who declare the secret society to be the menace of the age! No, I'm not putting it too strongly either; and if we didn't agitate *our* side of the question occasionally, our dire deeds and revolutionary attributes would stand forth in lurid relief against the sooty background of crime. Now, you let me talk a bit, and if I don't convince you in a shake that a frat does more for a man who has no money, no pull, than any other phase of college

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

life I'll eat my hat; and it's a perfectly good one too!

In the first place, Miss Brown, people are bound to find their own circle of friends, aren't they? Why of *course*, you know. If I told you that you'd be congenial with every individual fate sent your way, you wouldn't like it and I wouldn't blame you. You belong to the can't-be-surpassed, right-up-to-the-limit class you know; and if you and your associates happen to distinguish yourselves by a few letters from the Greek alphabet, what's the harm and why should a critical public froth at the mouth over it? Oh there are exceptions to every rule, of course; but you take my word for it, a fraternity can get more out of a crude, undeveloped freshman than any number of student organizations and Y. M. C. A. committees. It's certainly the tonic for a bad case of freshman-itis. What's *that*? Why don't we take everybody and thus raise the standard of citizenship? Now don't get sarcastic, Miss Brown; for if we did all that we'd be missionary societies, and for the sake

BETWEEN THE DANCES

of the churches, we don't want to take away their privileges.

Now I shall begin to refute all your statements by my own personal experience. Don't look bored already, for even if I don't give you the impression of being big enough to illustrate an argument, still I've had *some* experience! When I came to this college I was more hopeless than the average country boy, and that's going some. Hayseed — metaphorically speaking — stuck over me in huge chunks; garments of antediluvian tendencies adorned my awkwardness; even an extra strong telescope would have failed to locate one particle of fraternity material. I hid my talents, not under a bushel, but in a tiny room up under the eaves. I was so busy trying to solve the problem of existence that I had no time for real living. My lessons were neglected, my social career was never begun. I had no time, no opportunity for friends; and in the midst of this hopelessness, Theta Zeta discovered me. Not much of a discovery you're

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thinking; maybe not, but remember this is a before-and-after taking picture; and now that I have absorbed so much of Theta Zeta, I flatter myself that the result is not so worse. For didn't they transport me from my mansion in the eaves to their own fraternity house where I earned my board in a far easier fashion; didn't the upper classmen guide me in every college activity I chose to enter; didn't they advise me in my lessons, watch me in my politics, help me make friends on the campus and finally obtain a scholarship for me! Oh I can hear all these things about fraternities from now to the crack of doom, but there will always remain this question: Where would I have been and how would I have developed had not the fraternity opened its doors to me? I leave you to reason out the answer, Miss Brown, and—

What, is that the next dance? (*Rises.*) And I've spouted like a stump orator with never a chance for you to draw a long breath. Never mind, I've convinced you about fraternities, for I see it in your eye!

WAS IT WORTH WHILE?

CHARACTERS:

A SENIOR.

HIS COMPANION.

SCENE: *A college building.*

THE SENIOR: *Speaks.*

Well, we're at the end of it all, old fellow, and tomorrow we'll go forth into the cold, cold world, armed only with diplomas and with absolute confidence in ourselves to make good. For you, it's been an easy, pleasant journey with frivolities and friends 'long the way; for me—why should I dissemble—it's been a long, hard struggle from the very first, with many a disappointment, many a sacrifice, many a privation. And now we're at the end of it all; and as I pause in retrospection, I ask the natural question—the question that rises involuntarily to the lips of all those who have worked as I have worked: Has it been worth while? Wait, Jack, you are not fitted to answer it. You

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

have not known what it is to rise when the stars are still shining, in order that some task may be out of the way before class time; you have not sold papers for your room rent, waited table for your board, washed windows for the few extra pennies it brought you; tended furnaces to help make ends meet. You have not pegged away at your studies when muscles ached and brain was fagged; you have not denied yourself the little recreations and pastimes that should balance the application to books; you have not felt the need of friends, the ache for companionship, the craving for something besides the necessary routine. You have not known what it is to question the *why* of it all; to resent the fate that ties you down; to crave the strength and courage that will carry you to the end. Oh it's been a fight, Jack; and that is why I wonder tonight if I've made an investment that pays; if there is such a thing as the law of compensation; if, in return for labor, privation and heart-ache there has been a corresponding and proportionate return of that which

WAS IT WORTH WHILE?

is worth while; if the college culture, the college education and the college degree can be of more value than the dollars and cents that might have resulted had time, energy and strength been directed toward their acquisition. Listen, what are they singing down there on the campus? It's the college hymn, Jack, the college hymn. Somehow it grips the heart tonight as it's never done before. It's the last time we'll sing it together, old man, the last time; and—hang it all—what's the matter with me! I never knew I could feel like this. Jack my question is answered. It *is* worth while, it *has* paid; and the dear old college has given me something that will never fail me; that will prove far more precious than silver and gold. For the struggle has brought out the best in me, has made a man of me, and—Come, shall we join the bunch?

IN THE GIPSY CAMP

CHARACTERS:

A COLLEGE GIRL IN GIPSY COSTUME.

A COLLEGE MAN.

SCENE: *The Gipsy Camp.*

SHE: *Chants, walking to and fro.*

Wend your way to the gipsy camp;
Follow the light of the gipsy lamp;
Seek the rollicking gipsy band;
Let a gipsy maiden read your hand.
Hear the story she will unfold,
Cross her palm with a piece of gold,
Learn of your fate that is to be—
Do it all for sweet charity!

Drop your coin in the tambourine,
'Twill be for the college good I ween!

Wend your way to the gipsy camp;
Follow the light of the gipsy lamp!

(*She turns.*) You wish to pierce the
future? Then be seated—here. (*Seats
herself.*)

I'll turn my rainbow light until it
shines

Upon the many twisting, tortuous
lines

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

That—crisscross—mark your palm.
(*Takes hand of companion and gazes intently.*)

Ah, now they are quite clear.
A strange, suspicious hand. Some-
way, somehow, I feel
That tragedy and crime are close en-
twined,
Since evidence of treachery I find;
Since dire intrigue and cunning here
have placed their seal.

(*Aside.*)

Sit still, Tom Raymond, don't you
go;

Each future holds its weal and woe.
So don't you squirm, you silly
youth,

If I shall speak some words of truth.
For I have learned a thing or two
Of what you are and what you do,
And since my turn has come about
This gipsy maid will sure speak out.

(*Looks again at palm.*)

The headline glimmers faint and
weak and dim; it shows cerebral
inactivity I fear. (*Gazes more
closely.*)

And physical inertia is here.

IN THE GIPSY CAMP

Although a ray of comprehension
comes and goes,
And still a gift of trickery can here
be traced.

A trickery, perchance, that wins its
way

To certain ends, although it may be-
tray

A friend. Sit still, kind sir, sit still;
there is no haste.

(Aside.)

Go on, Tom Raymond, frown and
glower

And rage and rant; this is my hour.

You know you idle, cut and shirk

And cheat and crib in all your work.

You know you schemed to have a
say

In class election; bought your way,

Betrayed a friend who thought you
true—

A moment please! I'm not quite
through!

(Looks again at palm.)

The line of heart is heavily entrench-
ed; indeed,

'Tis overworked in maximum degree

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

With loves that are, and loves that
are to be.

Affaires d'amour that claim a worthless
self as creed.

No Mount of Jupiter I see, which
means a want

Of dignity. The Mount of Mercury
descries

A strong, inventive faculty for lies,
While flattery and flirting branch-
ing lines do flaunt.

(*Aside.*)

'Tis true, Tom Raymond, you're a
flirt.

You've never tried to save a hurt;
You've made a farce of college life,
So profit now by my advice.

Forget yourself; be straight and true,
Then better things will come to you,
And when a gipsy reads your hand
She'll scan your soul—and under-
stand!

(*She rises and walks to and fro, chant-
ing.*)

Wend your way to the gipsy camp;
Follow the light of the gipsy lamp;
Seek the rollicking gipsy band;
Let a gipsy maiden read your hand.

IN THE GIPSY CAMP

Hear the story she will unfold,
Cross her palm with a piece of gold,
Learn of your fate that is to be—
Do it all for sweet charity!
Drop your coin in the tambourine,
'Twill be for the college good I ween!
Wend your way to the gipsy camp;
Follow the light of the gipsy lamp.

THE FRESHMAN GIBBERS

CHARACTERS:

A SOPHOMORE.

HER ACCOMPLICES.

A FRESHMAN.

SCENE: *The Dormitory.*

SOPHOMORE: *Speaks, motioning to her companions.*

Quiet now, girls. Do be on your guard, and don't carry the fun too far! (*Impressively.*) Remember *this*, what *we* consider freshman discipline, the faculty may call hazing. (*Knocks at door, then enters room.*) All alone Miss Brown? Fortune indeed smiles upon us! (*Turns.*) Advance, Sophomores and receive the salute of this newest recruit to the freshmen ranks. (*Pauses.*) Salute, Miss Brown, salute! (*Sternly.*) A soldier's first duty is obedience. *That's* better. Now be seated, and lest the brilliancy of the sophomoric constellation utterly dazzle you, we shall place this blind upon your eyes. (*Blindfolds her.*) You are upon the

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

eve of a new experience; you are upon the threshold of the college world and ere you enter its sacred portals, you must listen to grave instructions; you must vow new vows; you must pass under the rod of chastening which the faculty entrusts only to the favored sophomores. (*Solemnly.*) Do you promise to fulfill your obligations? (*Pauses.*) I don't like your attitude, Miss Brown, unless you become docile and flexible, my duty compels me to lay your insubordination before the faculty. Ah, your tone is better. I detect even a resolute resonance in your monosyllable. (*With great dignity.*) As I have said, you are upon the threshold of the college world and ere you stretch forth your hand for the treasures of its storehouse, you must make a worthy sacrifice. (*Turns head.*) Fellow-sophomores, you behold the luscious braids which crown the head of the neophyte. Is it not fitting that she offer it to the God of Knowledge? I see by your expression that your thought is in accord with mine. (*Aside, hurriedly.*) Light the

THE FRESHMAN GIBBERS

candle, Nell, and hold the switch so that the burned hair falls on her face: don't use any more than is necessary, for its the only switch I have! (*Resuming her former tone.*) Hold fast the victim; even as she laments her former crown of beauty, so shall she realize the futility of freshman hopes! (*Aside, hurriedly.*) Jess, did you fill that glove with salt, and put it on the ice as I told you to do? Now is the time to hold it out to her! (*Resuming her former tone.*) Clasp the hand of the Departed Spirit! Ah, you shudder, for it brings you a silent warning; it comes from the Never-Never-Sophomore Land; from those freshmen who have failed in the tests submitted to them! Shake again, the sensation may prepare you for the iron hand of the faculty which is sure to descend upon you, when you least suspect it.

And yet, we are commanded to impose a few more tasks upon you. *First* (*impressively*), spin like a top. A little faster, please—that's better but you can improve even upon that. Whoa, now! Slower, slower; now,

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mark time. This little stunt is given, not only as a hygienic exercise but as a preparation to the study of astronomy. Seeing stars is always such a help to the ignorant freshman. *Next!* Stew like an oyster. What's that? You don't know how? (*Turning her head.*) Fellow-sophomores you hear the confession that falls from the lips of the neophyte. Can you conceive of an educational system that fails to impart such knowledge? Not to stew like an oyster my dear, argues yourself a lobster. But suppose you try! (*Pause.*) Originality does mean so much these days. Dear me! I'm sure no self-respecting oyster would do like *that!* You've failed, that's all, and we must lay it up against you.

But one more labor remains; you must gibber like an idiot. *Gibber*, I said—*gibber!* G-i-b-b-e-r! Why everybody in college knows how to gibber; its a part of the curriculum. Suppose you try. (*Pause.*) That's beautifully done; you're a genius at it. Why I've never heard anything better, really I haven't! (*Pauses and speaks*

THE FRESHMAN GIBBERS

anxiously.) But there's no use in overdoing it. We don't mean you to take it so seriously, and please stop! You've shown that you can do it, and—(*Shakes her violently.*) Stop, I say, stop! (*Turns in agitation.*) Girls, something's wrong, decidedly wrong and—(*Turns again.*) Oh come, Miss Brown, we're through with our joking and are waiting to carry you off to a fudge party. Sophs will be Sophs you know and—(*Turns.*) Girls, look at her eyes. Did you ever see anything so wild? And, just listen to those incoherent little murmurs! Do you suppose that—(*shudders*) why it chokes me to think of it—that her mind could have given way? (*Turns again.*) Listen, Miss Brown, listen, won't you stop just for a moment? (*Turns and wrings her hands in despair.*) Oh those dreadful little moans! She's raving, *raving*, and—my teeth are chattering like castanets and my knees are knocking together. We'll be expelled every one of us, and to think that we've wrecked her reason. Oh I'll never get over it, *never*. (*Turns again.*) Don't cry that way, *don't!*

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

(*Turns and motions away her companions.*) Go away, all of you! Maybe I can bring her 'round—hurry, hurry! (*Turns again and endeavors to speak in a calm voice.*) Now look at me, my dear, look at me; be calm—perfectly calm; steady, now, steady! Don't laugh, *please* don't. (*Suddenly.*) What's that? Can't help it? (*With suspicion.*) Do you mean to say—is it possible—that you've been pretending, that you've tricked us, that you've made us the laughing stock of the campus? (*Shaking her.*) You impudent little freshman, you deserve to have your ears boxed, but I'm so relieved not to be in line for arrest on account of unwarrantable theft of reason that I'll forgive you on the spot and bear you off to the fudge party. (*Opens door and calls.*) Girls, *girls*! Wait a minute, for I'm bringing you a bright, particular star for the Dramatic Club! Come along, you delusion and snare, and—oh a plague on all freshmen, say I.

EVERY LASSIE HAS HER LADDIE

CHARACTERS:

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ENTERTAIN-
MENT COMMITTEE.

HER SORORITY MEMBERS.

SCENE: *The sorority house.*

THE CHAIRMAN: *Speaks, seated.*

Now that everything else is out of the way, we'll take up the matter of this list for the fraternity party. (*Raps violently.*) Order! (*Shaking head.*) No I won't recognize any motion to postpone this particular business; you know well enough that every man must have a girl for this dance, and even if you don't care for the crowd, it's up to you to do the decent thing. If I were inclined to be "catty" I'd say right now "I told you so," for I knew all along that we'd have this rumpus when it came to pairing off. You all talk mighty eloquently about submerging personalities for the good of the

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sorority and all that; but it's mostly talk, and—oh groan away, I don't care. I never was in favor of entertaining this entire fraternity anyway; they're not our sort, and—(*Consulting paper.*)

Here goes! The first name on the list is John Smith. Who'll go with him? (*She pauses and looks anxiously around.*) Dear me! (*Sarcastically.*) Each one too modest to suggest herself, I presume! Honestly, girls, he's a human encyclopedia and is writing a perfectly corking thesis on—(*hesitates*). Well—it's corking, anyway. He really does wear good neckties, his nails are clean and—(*sharply*) what if he doesn't dance and doesn't talk nonsense by the yard! Why I should think any one of you would be glad to have a bit of real conversation sandwiched in between the usual thick layers of campus idiocy; and you ought to count it a privilege to know a young man with a real purpose. (*With dignity.*) Will you repeat your remark, Ruth? Oh, if he's such a paragon why don't I go with him myself? (*Sweetly.*) To be frank I'm not that conceited. (*Turns.*) Car-

EVERY LASSIE

lota is the only one who is intellectually capable of conversing with him. (*Raises her hand.*) Not a word Carlota, I'm putting your name opposite his (*writes hastily*), and if you don't keep him romping through mathematical monstrosities and spilling over the Greek alphabet, I've missed my guess.

(*Scans her paper.*) Dick Jones is next; who'll ride in his automobile? It's bright and new. (*Counts.*) Three hands raised—what a difference wheels do make even if most of them *are* in the head! (*Sharply.*) Stop squabbling, girls! If you can't decide who draws the prize, ballot for him!

(*Consults paper.*) George Smith! Well I must confess that he isn't very desirable and I haven't the nerve to ask any of you to go with him, for I just know that he's had a dark, desperate and dissipated past, but—(*Turns quickly.*) Do my ears deceive me, Mildred, or did I hear you say you'd play victim? (*Writes.*) You are certainly a peach to do it and it will be a splendid example of antithesis—

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sunshine and shadow, saint and sinner,
and all that sort of thing!

Frank Forest! What's *that*?
(*Wearily.*) Of course he doesn't wear
the right kind of collars but someway,
it seems a little extreme to condemn
a man to utter oblivion just on that
account. (*Suddenly.*) Oh, I know
what to do, we'll make Evelyn go with
him—a pledge won't have the nerve
to object, and—(*As she writes.*)

Roy Richards is next. (*Pause—she
lifts her head.*) Postively I could cut
the silence, it's so thick. Do you
girls realize that some of the greatest
men in the world have stuttered?
(*Hesitatingly.*) Well—I can't just re-
member *who*, but it's true just the
same; I'm sure I've read it somewhere.
(*Pause.*) Oh doesn't *anybody* want
him? (*Coaxingly.*) Amy, do help us
out; we'll let you off your term dues if
you will, won't we girls? Of course
you *do* attract attention but a good,
heavy veil will help to conceal your
identity and it takes him so long to
reach the point that you won't need to
talk much. Thanks, Amy. (*Writes.*)

EVERY LASSIE

Harry Hardcastle, next! What's that, Lucia? He isn't a Theta Gamma man? Well of course that's unfortunate, but we can't expect everybody to be on our side. It's a parallel case to the darkness of heathendom, compared to the enlightenment of Christian nations. And while we're using the missionary lingo, I may as well say that if anybody can convert this particular pagan and make him see daylight, it's *you*, Lucia! Consider yourself singled out for the sacrifice (*writes*), and—(*Raising head.*) What is it, Amy? May you swap Roy for Harry? Ask Lucia, for Harry has passed out of my hands, forever, I hope. (*Suddenly.*) Good gracious! There's the name of that post-graduate, Hall! Impossible, he is; once again impossible, and after that, "out of all whooping", to quote our friend Rosalind; but you've all been so good about assuming this social responsibility that I'm sure you won't balk even now. (*Turns.*) You've saved him for me? I don't understand, nor do I know why I should be destined for this honor.

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

It's mean to disappoint you when you've planned this Queen-o'-the-May stunt for me, but I'm going out of town that night for the Beta dance. Oh I've had my date for ages and ages, so somebody else must look out for Brother Hall. (*Rises.*) Time for my car—here, Kathryn (*hands paper to her*), finish the list. (*Kisses her hand.*) Goodbye dear children. So glad to have helped you out in your extremity! Have one grand, glorious, rip-roaring time at the party and don't hang too many scalps to your belts! 'Tis a custom of barbarians, and you must not forget for a moment that you are Greeks! Goodbye.

MEMORY'S BOOK

CHARACTERS:

AN ALUMNA.

HER COMPANION.

SCENE: *By a tea-table.*

THE ALUMNA: *Speaks, seated.*

Is it one lump of sugar, Nell, or two? It's so very long since you have taken tea with me, you Doctor of Philosophy, that I'm confusing your taste with that of someone else. (*Hands cup.*) Do you realize that twelve years ago this very day, we signed our names in the registrar's book, went boldly forth into an unknown land and immediately became the center of attraction? We were good-looking freshmen—if I do say it as shouldn't—and even if we did choose different sororities, we have disproved the theory that friendship ceases when paths diverge. You donned the arrow—I chose the crescent—and after more than a decade of time, we sit here side

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

by each, placidly smoking the pipe of peace—I speak figuratively, my dear—when, according to authorities, we should be brandishing the tomahawk of hostility. (*Pauses and leans forward.*) There you are, Nell, tilting your cup to see the tea-grounds, just as you used to do when we clamored for you to tell our fortunes. How the standpoint changes; on this particular day, I'm not anxious about the future for I've learned that it shapes itself; but I *am* longing for glimpses of the past. Do you feel that way, too, Nell? (*Settles back in chair.*) Then we might as well confess that we're getting old—it's a sure sign—and soon we'll be greeting each other with a tactful "Time has touched you lightly." Nay, even in an unguarded moment we may speak of each other as "remarkably well-preserved." Funny isn't it, but what do we care! Let's forget the handle to your name that attests your cleverness; let's forget that I have a hundred domestic problems and that my cook has just given notice; and, together, let us turn

MEMORY'S BOOK

the pages of Memory's book. Memory's book, by the way Nell, in substantial form—a trifle dusty, and dilapidated but still intact—lies on the table back of you. (*Points.*) What is it? Why my junk book of course! I found it in the attic this morning and in a jiffy I was transported to the Land of Used-to-Be. (*Pauses.*) Never had a junk book? Nell, I'm ashamed of you; why your college career has been like the play of Hamlet, with the ghost left out, for every page of this volume (*reaches for book*), bedecked as it is in programs, dance cards and ridiculous little mementos, liberates its own particular ghosts of foolish and tender memories. A junk book? Why it's the aftermath of college life!

(*Places book on lap and turns pages.*) Aren't these first pages truly typical of a freshman? Crowded, high-colored, no system, no arrangement. What is this? I don't wonder that you ask. Why, they're my pledge ribbons, and when extended, each piece measures two yards in length and three inches in width. You remember how it hap-

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pened—oh, you *do*. The girls had bidden me before chapel, naturally expecting that I would take time for reflection. With the lack of convention that checkered my college career, I accepted before my bidders were half through their invitation, scorned all discretion and insisted that the ribbons be pinned upon me at once. There was nothing at hand save this huge bow whose use was primarily, for decoration; but I had my way, and as a result, nearly queered the chapel service. (*Turns page.*) Yes, it *is* a giddy necktie; it belonged to Charlie Clinton, my freshman swain—you remember him. He was fairly consumed with a desire to distinguish himself in my eyes, so he climbed a pole one dark night and planted the freshman banner at the top. The deed was noteworthy, but the end was disastrous, for he fell into the arms of some waiting sophs; after they had gathered up the fragments and had pieced together enough of him to last through the year, the executor of the estate sent me this necktie as a remnant of the occasion. I

MEMORY'S BOOK

met Charlie the other day, quite portly, now, with a suspicion of gray about the temples, and we laughed about old days. When his son reaches the dignity of college, he is to be sent to me before he matriculates as a freshman, and I am to adorn him with this self-same necktie. With this as a talisman and as an incentive, if he doesn't lick every soph within hailing distance and tie his flag to Pike's Peak, he hasn't inherited the fighting blood of his dad! (*Turns page.*)

Positively, the souvenirs of the sophomore year are as varied as those of the freshman period; but, after all, there is little difference between the two classes. Did you ever see such a display of dance programs? Against such a background, the few articles of definite form assume the prominence of a zero upon a perfectly good white quiz paper. Don't break that splinter, Nell, it's from the mammoth pile that we set on fire at the rally held before the big football game; the game that went down in history. Wouldn't it be heavenly to gather once more around such a bon-

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

fire, to watch the flames shoot higher and higher; to shiver, half with cold and half with excitement, to hear the stirring speeches, the deafening yells, and to join in the serpentine march after it's all over! (*Pauses.*) Nell you are so practical. Why do you bring me down to earth, by even an insinuation of rheumatism! (*Turns page.*) No, that isn't a scalp, merely a lock from the bushy mane of the football hero who saved the aforesaid game! I cut it off, myself, while the fellows held him. (*Points.*) Note this particular dance card that's heavily outlined with red ink to signify its importance. My dear, it was at this affair that I first met Jack; you may see his scrawl after eight of the sixteen dances. (*Pauses.*) Nell, you have such a way of suggesting unpleasant things. Of course I shouldn't want my daughter to do it—but that's another story. (*Turns page.*)

Doesn't the junior collection look imposing? Dear old junior year, the best of all! (*Points.*) This is the program from the "Prom," where I led,

MEMORY'S BOOK

with Bliss Celestial to encompass me,
Joy Ineffable to guide my footsteps,
Memories Radiant to follow in my
train—and Jack to hold my hand.
Speaking of Jack, here (*points*) is the
tobacco-pouch I made him, all in his
fraternity pink and blue; and to this
very pouch there clings the one romance
of my life. I've never told it,
Nell; but today, it's different, and any-
way you shall have the story. We
quarreled, as people foolishly do, and
each one was too proud to say "forgive
me" to the other. One day a trusty
henchman of Jack's brought me back
this little bag into which I had put so
many loving stitches, without a word!
Then, indeed, the bottom of the world
fell out and wasn't reinstated until
weeks afterwards, when I found, inside
the pouch, Jack's repentant little note.
He had chosen to send it in this way
and—never mind the sequel, Nell—
I've been living it ever since. (*Turns
page.*)

Someway, the senior souvenirs are
not so plentiful, nor so frivolous, nor
do they bring the same thrill upon

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

retrospection. Maybe it's because there's a certain sadness about it all, a realization, never to be wholly dismissed, of parting, of future responsibility. (*Points.*) There are all our stunts, duly chronicled and duly placed, with a special memory for each. A paper napkin from the class picnic, scribbled over with names. Oh, Nell, some of them are on the roll of fame, like you; more of them are just ordinary individuals, like me. A tiny knot of class colors from the dance—we wore them on our sleeves, didn't we, and vowed eternal friendship even to our enemies? A faded rosebud from the play, my first and last curtain call. A tiny pin from Baccalaureate Sunday, 'twas used upon me with force when my head began to nod; a brass Phi Beta Kappa key from Class Day, to taunt me with what I couldn't get; and merely a program of Commencement Night. Commencement Night when we marched boldly up to the magician and by a touch of the diploma, were transformed into high-browed alumnae! (*Closes book.*)

MEMORY'S BOOK

We'll close the book, Nell. It seems so long ago, so like a dream existence, and—(*jumps up*) listen, there's Jack's whistle. After all the Past is only to think about, for there's nothing quite so beautiful as the Now!

AFTER THE CURTAIN GOES DOWN

CHARACTERS:

THE PROMPTER.

THE CAST.

SCENE: *The stage.*

THE PROMPTER: *Speaks.*

Well it's over, and I reckon I've earned the right to draw one good, long, full breath. You can't tell me anything about artificial respiration—I'm a living demonstration of how it can be done; if you doubt my statement, try prompting! You didn't need it? What if you *didn't*! I had to anticipate your forgetting just the same and keep my eyes literally glued to the page, all of which cannot be labeled as a joke! Why Mildred, when you were giving your pathetic little speeches to the accompaniment of a sniffing audience, I kept blinking and blinking until the text fairly swam in the flood; and if I hadn't held desperately to my rabbit's foot

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

somebody would have been sure to forget. Speaking of tear-producing situations, why Colonel, your decease *couldn't* have been more effective. All we needed to make it quite perfect was the Dead March from Saul. What a comfort to know that, no matter what a failure you make of living, your dying was perfectly satisfactory.

(*Turning and speaking mechanically.*) Oh didn't they do well! I'm so proud of every member in the cast that my head is in the clouds and I wouldn't begrudge anyone the moon itself!

(*Turning in other direction and speaking sharply.*) What's *that*? The invalid chair broken? That means we'll have to pay for it. Just lead me to the heavy-weight that shattered it and I'll settle with him. Arch, I believe it was you; you look guilty!

(*Fretfully.*) Do pull up your belt. In the last act it was below your waist in the back and though I don't suppose it matters *now*, still the Russian blouse effect is not meant for you. (*Patiently.*) Yes, Joe, you made love beautifully; so beautifully, that we just felt you

AFTER THE CURTAIN

must have been doing it all your life; anyway a man couldn't help making love to Kathryn. (*Turning.*) Yes, Kathryn dear, I see you in spite of that barricade of roses and not a one of them is so sweet as you. (*Quickly.*) Stuart, do you mind helping me with this stuff? And will you be responsible for the Confederate flag? I took it from the museum without permission, and ever since I've had visions of spending a season in the city jail. It's better for *you* to take charge of it. Why you surely would endure a little thing like that for the good of the cause—how unreasonable! Can you take *this*, and *this*, and—oh yes, the candelabra too; and *could* you make room for the swing and the window box? That's nice of you. (*Sharply.*) Get out of my way, Johnny Jenkins, you bold, bad man! I've often wondered for what vocation you're fitted; but now, since I've seen you as the villain in this play—I *know*. To be double-dyed in crime sounds so thrilling, so mysterious, and so downright desperate. (*Turning back and speak-*

IN THE COLLEGE DAYS

ing gushingly.) Oh, thank you, thank you. It *was* pretty I think, and everybody did *so* well. Yes, pretty tired if I must confess it, but perfectly willing to start all over again. (*Turning again.*) Bob Spencer, surely you're not going home in that darky rig? Why you haven't even taken off the blacking! Original, you say? Aboriginal, I call it. You're likely to be arrested but now that the play's over and we don't need you for rehearsals, it makes no special difference. (*Calling.*) Girls, girls! Please gather up all your traps and take them home; last year we found fifteen sidecombs, as many powder puffs and—(*suddenly*). Here, you men! Put all the trees over by the steps and don't get the plants mixed in with them. This furniture goes back tonight; oh yes it *does*, even if I stay here till morning to see about it. Put the swords on the fire-escape. Nonsense, it's perfectly safe; and—(*turning*). Oh, Marie! You were the sweetest ever, and aren't you sorry it's all over and don't you wish we were just beginning again?

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